

LOUISIANA LIVESTOCK BRAND COMMISSION BOARD MEETING

January 15, 2021

10:00 AM

**Veterans Memorial Auditorium
5825 Florida Boulevard, 1st Floor
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70806
Proceedings**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Mike Strain, DVM.

PLEDGE

Honorable Brian Frazier led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken by John Walther

Members present:

Commissioner Mike Strain, DVM, Sheriff Sam Craft, Henry Capdeboscq, Honorable John Belton, James LeLeux, Sheriff Ivy Woods, Victor Blanchard, Charles Garrett, Calvin LeBouef, Sheriff Brian Spillman, Gertrude Hawkins, Honorable Brian Frazier, Sheriff Julian Whittington, Sheriff Stephen Prator, John Thompson,

Members absent:

Brent Robbins, DVM, Nickey Smith, Jonathan Lopinto

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

OPENING STATEMENTS

Commissioner Strain spoke on livestock theft and farm crimes.

Honorable John Belton asked to say prayer and was approved by Commissioner Strain.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Amy McInnis did the oath of office swearing in of new members.

Commissioner Strain nominated Sheriff Julian Whittington as the Vice Chairman and it was second by Charles Garrett. It was approved unanimously.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Honorable John Belton made a motion to approve minutes as written; it was seconded by James LeLeux. No comments, additions or deletions. Motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COMMISSION

John Walther started with the introduction of staff. He spoke about Dawn Bellelo's retirement and introduced Cheryl Fontenot as the new state Brand Recorder and the Brand Program Manager, Mr. Scott Perry.

John Walther gave an update on the increase in the number of cases being investigated.

OLD BUSINESS

Scott Perry introduced the Livestock Brand Commission enforcement staff: brand inspectors Jared Steward and Carnie Burcham; and James Fail the new enforcement officer to the staff. He spoke on how they work alongside local authorities and animal control across the state to address many issues with livestock and farm related crimes. The Brand Commission investigated 284 complaints in the last year and currently has 4875 active brands.

Scott Perry also spoke about the brand enforcement officers working the check-ins at the sale barns. Last year they checked in 202,000 head of cattle and livestock.

Commissioner Strain thanked inspectors and law enforcement for all that they do to help solve cases.

John Walther spoke about the revised statute 3:732 which bounds and authorizes the Livestock Brand Commission. He stated the registry of brands goes back to 1944 and are currently kept in his office. He recommended they be moved to the State Archives.

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Commissioner Strain also recommended looking into moving the brand records to State Archives to make sure they are held in perpetuity.

John Walther discussed the Crime Stoppers Program, (statute 3:750). This program provides rewards for farm related crimes and livestock thefts. This commission votes to make those awards.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Strain introduced Amy McInnis, Executive General Counsel. Amy provided information on the Delegation of Authority regarding the Prevention of Sexual Harassment, including the passage of legislation in 2019 regarding the prevention of sexual harassment in state agencies and the mandatory 1 hour of training for all public servants including boards and commissions. She advised the members to watch the video and sign the acknowledgment form and return.

Amy requested the resolution for the board.

Commissioner Strain spoke on why this is imposed on the Boards and Commissions.

John Belton made the motion to adopt the Resolution – Delegation of Authority regarding Prevention of Sexual Harassment to the department; it was seconded by James Leleux. No comments, additions or deletions. Motion passed unanimously.

Amy McInnis also reminded members to complete their Ethics Training.

John Walther spoke on the Legislative updates, specifically the bill RS 3:734 that gave additional authorities to our brand inspectors.

Commissioner Strain also spoke on the bill that put our Livestock Brand Officers on the same footing as the Timber Enforcement Officers. Both entities are State Police Commissioned, Post-Certified Officers.

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Scott Perry spoke of additional authority to help local jurisdictions.

Commissioner Strain thanked them for making these bills happen.

Chuck Garrett asked to have a lifetime brand option for registering or renewing brands.

Commissioner Strain agreed to request and will add legislation for a request of the lifetime brand. He would also like to make the brand inheritable and transferrable.

Commissioner Strain asked for a proposal resolution for the lifetime brand. John Belton made the proposal and it was seconded by Henry Capdebosq. Motion was approved.

Commission Strain spoke on budget funding and budget cuts.

John Walther spoke on the next meeting update and stated since the Brand Commission meets once a year they would leave the date open for now.

Chuck Garrett asked for a motion for Crime Stopper money for Mr. Edgar Cason who had 20 head of cattle stolen. Victor Blanchard seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Commissioner Strain asked for a motion to adjourn. Ivy Woods made a motion to adjourn; it was seconded by John Thompson. Motion passed with no objections.